

Religious Songs on Youtube: The Impact on Students

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Abstract. Beginning in 2018 Indonesian people are treated to religious songs from Sabyan Gambus group whose vocalist Nissa Sabyan. The songs sung by Nissa Sabyan echoed almost in every layer of the society. One of the media that made it easy for people to enjoy various songs from several Nissa Sabyan albums is YouTube. This paper was aimed to analyze the YouTube's role of students' religious dimension. The method used in this research is a survey with a qualitative approach. The survey was conducted on 147 students. The results of the study prove that YouTube as an Internet-based audio-visual media is an effective medium for spreading religious nuances. The majority of students feel to be religious by listening to Nissa Sabyan's songs, even though they don't understand the contents of the lyrics. Thus, it can be concluded that YouTube has a significant role in fostering a religious sense of students.

Keywords: Religious songs, sabyan gambus, youtube impact.

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INTRODUCTION ~ In the early 2018, Sabyan Gambus religious music group whose vocalist is Nissa Sabyan released a video clip entitled "Ya Habibil Qolbi" in YouTube. In an instant, the video clip that was thick with the prayer to the Prophet Muhammad was successfully watched by millions of people. Followed by uploading another video clip, Sabyan Gambus's name became increasingly viral and reached up the top level of the music group in Indonesia. Various online and television media also covered and reported Sabyan Gambus music group. The unique phenomena revealed that it was not only teenagers who were drugged by the sound of Nissa Sabyan's voice, but also the adult. In fact, almost every place we visited, such as malls, cafes, pharmacies, private homes,

mosques, etc., always be heard Sabyan Gambus music. This phenomenon has a magnetism for us. When the wider community, especially students, are interested and absorbed in Sabyan Gambus songs, there is a problem that we need to study, are religious songs spread through YouTube able to improve student religiosity? The reason is that religious songs released by Sabyan Gambus are Arabic songs. Meanwhile, the people who enjoyed and sang the songs did not necessarily understand the contents of the lyrics. We also need to make sure, how is the role of YouTube in improving student religiosity?

The results of previous studies have shown significant achievements in the topic of using YouTube among students. For example, Lai (2013) concluded that

YouTube has reformed the information-seeking comporment and learning style of various persons. Jung and Lee (2015) conducted research in two countries, and concluded that even though Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology's four predictors can describe YouTube receipt to a high degree, the impact of each predictor on YouTube receipt diverges pointedly conferring to the cultural setting and the character of the instructors and the students. Similarly, the results of the study of Jones and Cuthrell (2011), concluded that YouTube is an advanced technology implementation that educators can obligate to use in their schoolrooms as they involve 21st century students.

Different from previous studies, this study aimed to explore and analyze the impact of religious songs spread through YouTube in the dimensions of student religiosity. We focus the studies on student settings within the campus environment. Students have a special interest in religious songs spread through YouTube. They usually access the Internet either through campus internet network or via the private Internet, so that YouTube can be accessed easily. Even now, University faculty uses YouTube and other social networking sites to disseminate information (Haase, 2009). However, what is the impact of listening to religious songs through YouTube? Is it just limited to enjoyment, or does it have a real impact on students' religious aspects?

METHODS

Survey method was the main method in this study, and a qualitative approach was also used. The sample used was 147 students. They consisted of four classes in one batch. According to gender, the sample consisted of 30 male and 117 female students. Their age is in the range of 19-24 years. Their area of origin is quite diverse, spread in the of West Java Province. In total of 49 people (33.3%) are from Sumedang, 28 people (19%) are from Cirebon, 24 people (16.3%) are from Bandung, and 46 people (31.4%) are from other regions in and outside of West Java.

Students were assigned to fill out online surveys sent via Google Docs. Researchers used Google Docs facilities because a variety of questions type that should meet the needs of most survey creators (Travis, 2010). This type of survey consists of Likert and Gutman scales, and open-ended questions. Through these three types of surveys, we explored their perspectives on Nissa Sabyan's songs that are presented for free via YouTube.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

We processed the data into three topics, which relate to the aspect of song enjoyment, lyrics understanding, and the effectiveness of YouTube in distributing the religious songs. Through these three topics, we analyzed and interpreted the survey results.

Enjoyment of Songs

We ask students, "How many times a day do you listen Nissa Sabyan's songs?" Their answers can be seen in Figure 1.

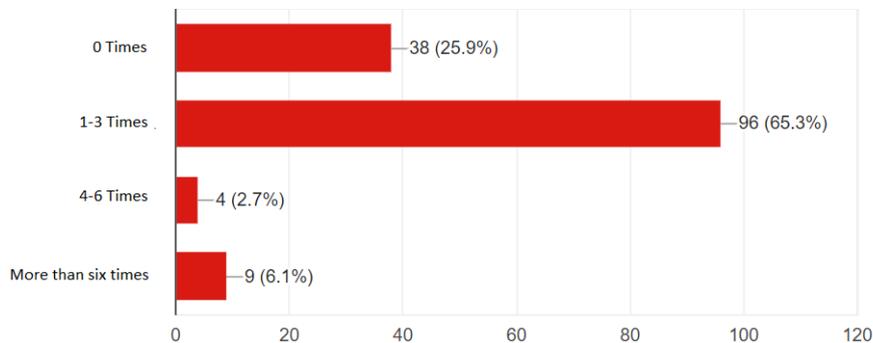


Figure 1. Student answers on how many times a day they listen to Nissa Sabyan's song

Based on Figure 1, it can be identified that student majority (65.3%) listened to NissaSabyan's song 1-3 times per day. The rest, although in small numbers, there were students who listened to more than six times a day (6.1%). Meanwhile, 38 students (25.9%) who claimed never listened to NissaSabyan's song, after they were traced, they were not among the fans of Nissa Sabyan's songs. However, basically they

have heard and know the existence of NissaSabyan, so that they were provided several other questions. In other questions, it was revealed, when they were asked, "What do you like most about Nissa Sabyan album?" Their answers are shown in Figure 2 below.

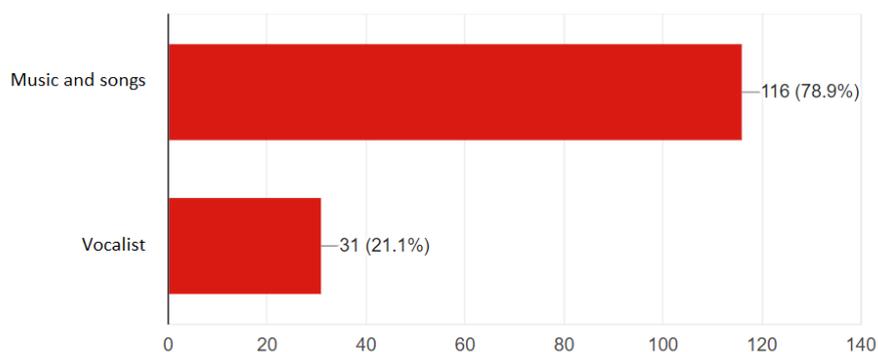


Figure 2. Student answers on what do they like most of Nissa Sabyan album

Through Figure 2, it can be seen that student majority (78.9%) liked most the aspect of music and the song. Meanwhile, another small percentage (21.1%)

preferred their vocalist. We explored further through some open questions. Some students who preferred music and songs expressed the following reasons: 'because

the songs are very touching and carried a unique and genre and song theme and different from most other bands' (R1). There are also students who say 'because the song lyrics and melodies from NissaSabyan are very touching and make peace. when listening to it' (R2). Meanwhile, students who preferred the vocalist expressed the following reasons: 'because the vocalist is beautiful and enticing' (R3). There are also students who say, 'because Nissa Sabyan is my girl type, she is popular, very beautiful,

and her voice is good '(R4). Various reasons expressed by these students are basically rooted in the appearance of singers who can express song beauty well (Putman, 1990).

Understanding of the Lyrics

Students were asked about their understanding of the song lyrics sung by Nissa Sabyan. Their answers are presented in table 1 below.

Table 1. Understanding of students on Nissa Sabyan's song lyrics

Understanding of students on Nissa Sabyan's song lyrics	Yes	No
Are you a person who understands the contents of the lyrics?	68	79
Have you ever tried to understand the contents of the lyrics?	115	32

Based on Table 1, it can be identified that the majority of students (53.7%) do not understand the meaning of the song lyrics sung by Nissa Sabyan. However, the majority of students (78.2%) have tried to understand the lyrics of the songs sung by Nissa Sabyan. Thus, being a connoisseur of Nissa Sabyan's songs does not necessarily

understand what she is singing. This implies the existence of other motives why they become connoisseurs of religious songs of Sabyan Gambus album. Therefore, we try to give further questions, "Do you listen to Nissa Sabyan's songs that you feel to be a religious person?" Their answers can be seen in Figure 3 below.

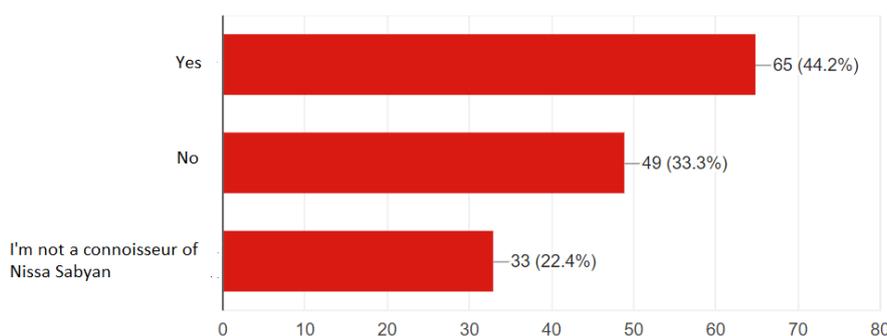


Figure 3. Student answers on religious feelings

Referring to Figure 3, it can be identified that as many as 65 students (44.2%) felt to

be religious by listening to Nissa Sabyan's songs. Meanwhile, 49 students (33.3%) did

not feel that they were religious by listening to Nissa Sabyan's songs. The remaining 33 students (22.4%) were not among the audience of the Sabyan Gambus album. Thus, the of student responses indicated that listening to religious songs, though they do not understand their meanings are able to improve their religious sense. This is inseparable from the influence of the lyrics and the melody of the song itself, which can foster an emotional relationship. In other words, lyrics and music have larger capability to straight temper change than melody alone (Sousou, 1997; Stratton & Zalanowski, 1991, 1994). This is in line with the results of other studies, which states that strong agreeable effects of singing that include well-being, benefits for posture, immune system and spiritual, emotional and social benefits (Bailey & Davidson, 2002, 2003; Beck, Cesario, Yousefi, & Enamoto, 2000; Cliff & Hancox, 2001; Silber, 2005; Singh, Sigroha, Singh, & Shokeen,

2017; Watanabe, 2005). Here, lyrics and music show more influence on students' feelings and thoughts. They feel the religious dimension is increasing by listening to religious songs. This can be caused by the nuances of religious songs that are identical to the creation of an approach to God and his prophet, because basically, religiousness is the personality's pursuit for finding a linking with the sublime or the blessed (Piedmont, 1999; Singh et al., 2017).

YouTube Effectiveness

We also surveyed the students' perspectives regarding YouTube's role in distributing religious songs, including the impact on the audience's religious dimension. The survey was conducted using a Likert scale, which consisted of statements Very Disagree (VD), Disagree (D), Slightly Agree (SA), Agree (A), and Very Agree (VA). Their views can be seen in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Student perspectives on YouTube's effectiveness

Student perspectives on YouTube's effectiveness	VD	D	SA	A	VA
YouTube is very effective at spreading art works.			20	44	82
YouTube is very effective in making people more religious.	2	20	79	23	23

Table 3 above shows that students built positive opinions about YouTube's effectiveness. The majority of the students strongly agree that YouTube is very effective to be used as a medium for art distribution. Especially, because YouTube can be a fan base of certain music groups (Schwemmer & Ziewiecki, 2018). Meanwhile, student opinions also clearly

show that they disagree that You Tube can make the listener community more religious. In other words, the religious dimension is not necessarily built only by appreciating religious songs through YouTube. This result is contradictory with their previous perspective. On the one hand, they disagree if listening to religious songs via YouTube can make them more

religious. However, on the other hand, they feel more religious by listening to religious songs through YouTube. This happens because their views on other people (society) are actually different from the views for themselves who feel more religious by listening to religious songs through YouTube.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of this study, it can be concluded that YouTube is an effective medium for distributing religious songs. Through YouTube, students can choose and listen to songs and the vocalist they like. Students are interested in the aesthetic of sound, music and the melody of the song. Not all the religious song lyrics that they listened were understood by them. However, the majority of the students feel to be religious by listening to religious songs from Nissa Sabyan through YouTube.

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